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BAKER'S EDITION
OF PLAYS

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To Meet Mr. Thompson



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BOSTON

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TO MEET MR. THOMPSON

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FOR FEMALE CHARACTERS ONLY

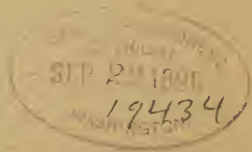
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MRS. CLARA J. DENTON

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1890



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CHARACTERS.

BELLA *The young lady hostess*
LOU
ELLA
MARY } *Young ladies. Residents of the same town and*
EMILY } *acquainted with each other. They are also*
GRACE } *Bella's guests.*
JULIA
FANNIE }

COSTUMES.

Any tasteful dresses that may be suitably worn at a small evening party. Hats and wraps are worn on entering. The latter should of course correspond with the season, and are to be laid aside at the proper time.



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TO MEET MR. THOMPSON.

SCENE. — *A parlor. Eight chairs must be placed carelessly about so that the occupants will be within easy speaking distance of one another and yet not too far from C. Curtain rises. BELLA enters L, and sits.*

BELLA. To think that at last, at long, long last, this village really possesses a full-grown, live, rational, young man! I can hardly realize it. To be sure, we have had Tom Jones, and Harry Spar, and John Smith, the first and second not yet out of their teens, the last a forlorn widower of forty. But now, O joy! here is an eligible young man of not more than twenty-three or four. Tall, handsome, dark-eyed, a lawyer, and with— Oh, *such* a moustache! Dear me! I can hardly wait until I see him entering the room. (*A door-bell rings behind the scenes. BELLA starts up.*) Oh, I do hope that is he! What a charming *tête-à-tête* we may have before the other girls get here! (*Enter LOU, R. BELLA rushes to meet her. They embrace.*)

BELLA (*motioning L.*). Just step in here, Lou, and remove your wraps, and arrange your hair. (*Exit LOU, L.*) I might have known that Lou would be the

first one on hand. Of course that is her privilege, as she is my most intimate friend. (*Re-enter LOU, L. They both sit near C. as LOU speaks.*)

LOU. So, I am the first arrival. I did not expect to be. I thought the girls would all arrive early. O Bella! if you only knew the stir those invitations "to meet Mr. Thompson" have created in this stupid little burgh.

BELLA. Nonsense, Lou! why should it?

LOU. Why should it? Oh, now, Bella, don't pretend not to know that Mr. Thompson is the most delightful, most irresistible, most rare creature ever seen in this huddle called by courtesy a "town."

BELLA. So you have seen him? (*The bell rings. They both spring up, rush to centre, and exclaim together, excitedly, "There he is!" Enter ELLA, R. They rush forward, embrace her, and she is directed by BELLA into the adjoining room, as was LOU. Exit ELLA, L. BELLA and LOU resume seats.*)

LOU. Of course *Ella* would be here on time. I don't suppose cables and chains could have kept her at home to-night.

BELLA. Well, all of my invitations have been accepted. I don't suppose any of the girls would miss coming.

LOU. Unless it may be those whom you forgot to invite.

(*ELLA enters in time to hear the last word.*)

ELLA (*sits near the others*). And how many have you invited, Bella?

BELLA. Only nine.

ELLA }
and } Nine!
LOU. }

LOU. Poor Mr. Thompson!

ELLA. He will not live to tell the tale.

BELLA. I begin to think he foresees the danger, and that his instincts of self-preservation are too strong to admit of his coming.

(The bell rings again. They all start to their feet, and exclaim, "There he is!" as before. Enter MARY. Repeat as on ELLA's entrance. BELLA directs as before. Exit MARY, L. The others resume seats.)

ELLA. Of course *Mary* would come, trust her for that. Indeed, Bella, it is very generous of you to give all of us girls the pleasure of Mr. Thompson's acquaintance. *(Enter MARY.)* Almost any other girl would have kept his society for herself.

MARY *(approaches the others, and sits)*. But, we must have met him sometime, and, of course, she prefers to have the performance take place under her supervision, as it were.

LOU. Then, I think she will be disappointed, for I don't believe he's coming.

(The bell rings. All start up as before, repeat exclamation, etc. Enter EMILY, R. Repeat all "business" as on entrance of others. Exit EMILY, L. Others resume their places.)

MARY. Oh, I knew *she* would be here! It's so long since she's seen a young man, she *(enter EMILY, L.)* forgets how one looks.

EMILY *(coming forward)*. What is that? Who forgets how what looks? *(Sits near others.)*

BELLA. We all have forgotten how a full-grown, live young man looks.

EMILY. Well, where is your curiosity? Why don't you bring him out?

LOU. We await his royal pleasure.

(Bell as before. Repeat former business fully. Enter GRACE, R. Repeat as for others. Exit GRACE, L. The others resume their seats.)

EMILY. Oh, I knew *Grace* would come. She has been on what the boys call a "still hunt" for a *(enter GRACE, L.)* young man for nobody knows how long.

GRACE *(as she comes to the others, and sits)*. Who has been a young man for nobody knows how long? Surely, not Mr. Thompson?

BELLA. Oh, no! not *Mr. Thompson*.

LOU. Oh, dear, no! not *Mr. Thompson*.

ELLA. No indeed! not *Mr. Thompson*.

MARY. Oh, my, no! not *Mr. Thompson*.

EMILY. Why, certainly not *Mr. Thompson*. *(These answers must be very emphatic.)*

BELLA. I conclude you have not seen him, Grace?

GRACE. Seen him? Indeed, I haven't. I have *heard* of nothing else for the last two weeks but Mr. Thompson. Is he handsome?

ALL IN CONCERT. Handsome! handsome! Oh, oh, oh!—oh, oh, oh!

GRACE. Dear me, what a wonder he must be! But why doesn't he come? *(Bell, as before. Repeat former "business." Enter JULIA, R, as before. Exit JULIA, L. The others resume seats.)*

EMILY. Bella, you certainly were not on the look-out for beauty, when you invited Julia.

ELLA. Was she when she invited the rest of us?

MARY. Oh, come now, Ella! leave that (*enter JULIA, L.*) for Mr. Thompson to decide.

JULIA (*taking seat*). What must Mr. Thompson decide?

GRACE. Which one of this flock his highness shall escort to her home.

ELLA. He lives the nearest to my house. Doesn't that give me the first claim?

LOU. And my home is directly on the way thither, so that gives me his other arm.

MARY. Pshaw, girls! can't you see that he is in gallantry bound to escort the one who lives at the greatest distance from here? And *her* name is Mary.

EMILY. And my home is only two blocks from your house.

JULIA. But how can he go home with any of us, unless he first gets here?

(*Bell rings. Repeat former movements, etc. Enter FANNIE, R, as before. Exit FANNIE, L. All sit again.*)

GRACE. Now, girls, Fannie lives farther away than any of us.

JULIA. And if he goes home with her, he passes my door, so, I think (*enter FANNIE, L.*), Fannie and I will have him.

FANNIE (*joins others, and sits*). Have whom? Not Mr. Thompson?

ALL (*in concert and laughing*). Oh, yes, Mr. Thompson! Oh, yes, we'll all have Mr. Thompson!

FANNIE (*indignantly*). Why, girls, I am surprised at you all. But please don't include my name. The idea of angling for a young man in that way!

BELLA. O Fannie! don't scold us! the girls were only trying to decide whom he should escort home, and they settled on you and Julia.

FANNIE (*looking around*). But where is the young man?

ALL. Oh, he isn't here yet!

FANNIE. So, while you are waiting, you are settling the question of his attentions. You might cast lots on the matter. (*Sarcastically.*)

EMILY. I'll tell you a good plan, girls.

ALL. What is it? What is it?

EMILY. Let him choose for himself.

ALL. Oh! oh!

BELLA. Well, now, girls, since you have settled the question, I will tell you he probably will escort none of you home to-night, for I have invited his two sisters to accompany him. I knew you would be dying to meet them.

(*Bell rings. All exclaim, as before. A voice at right entrance calls loudly, "Miss Bella, here is a note for you!"*)

BELLA. You hear that, girls; pray excuse me a moment. (*Exit BELLA, R.*)

(*The others now huddle together at C., muttering to each other, "Mean thing!" "She did it on purpose!" "Much we care for his old sisters!" "She didn't want*

*him to go home with any of us !” “ We’ll pay her up !”
“ I’ll invite him to my house !” “ And so will I !” The
last exclamation in chorus. Enter BELLA, R., carrying
an open letter. They all drop quickly into their chairs,
and are silent.)*

BELLA (*coming to C.*). Young ladies, I have just received this note, which I will read. (*Reads.*)

“MISS BELLA,— We are forced, at the last minute, by circumstances beyond our control, to decline your very courteous invitation. I will call on you to-morrow, and explain more fully.

Yours with many regrets,
HARRY THOMPSON.”

(All rise, and come to C.)

LOU. So this is the way we “meet Mr. Thompson !”

ELLA. How charmed I have been to “meet Mr. Thompson !”

MARY. What a rare treat “to meet Mr. Thompson !”

EMILY. Oh, lovely Mr. Thompson !

GRACE. Delightful Mr. Thompson !

JULIA. Oh, rare Mr. Thompson !

FANNIE. Very rare, indeed !

ALL (*except BELLA*). The next time I go out “to meet Mr. Thompson ” —

BELLA (*smiling and courtesying*). Let us hope you will “meet Mr. Thompson.”

CURTAIN.

(Real names may be substituted, if preferred, throughout.)

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